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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/016,488	11/01/2001	Rainer Bindig	CERA 234	4569
24972	7590	03/02/2004	EXAMINER	
FULBRIGHT & JAWORSKI, LLP 666 FIFTH AVE NEW YORK, NY 10103-3198			AGUIRRECHEA, JAYDI A	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2834	

DATE MAILED: 03/02/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

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Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/016,488	Applicant(s) BINDIG ET AL.	
	Examiner Jaydi A. Aguirrechea	Art Unit 2834	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 December 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 27-52 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 27-52 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 12/22/2004 has been entered.

Claim Objections

2. Claim 33 is objected to because of the following informalities: In the limitation “and in that *the* areas”, the article *the* should be deleted. Appropriate correction is required.

3. Claim 49 is objected to because of the following informalities: “in that areas are produced *that are* at least large range”. Appropriate correction is required.

4. Claim 52 is objected to because of the following informalities: “and in that the ceramic material is weakened at these points”. It is not clear what the applicants mean with this limitation. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

5. Claims 27-52 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. It is not clear, as recited in claim 27, if the wire is going to be soldered to the basic metallization or to the joining layer.

6. A broad range or limitation together with a narrow range or limitation that falls within the broad range or limitation (in the same claim) is considered indefinite, since the resulting claim

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does not clearly set forth the metes and bounds of the patent protection desired. Note the explanation given by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences in *Ex parte Wu*, 10 USPQ2d 2031, 2033 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1989), as to where broad language is followed by "such as" and then narrow language. The Board stated that this can render a claim indefinite by raising a question or doubt as to whether the feature introduced by such language is (a) merely exemplary of the remainder of the claim, and therefore not required, or (b) a required feature of the claims. Note also, for example, the decisions of *Ex parte Steigewald*, 131 USPQ 74 (Bd. App. 1961); *Ex parte Hall*, 83 USPQ 38 (Bd. App. 1948); and *Ex parte Hasche*, 86 USPQ 481 (Bd. App. 1949). In the present instance, claims 41 and 52 recite the broad recitation *wherein the solder material is a tin-containing material*, and the claim also recites *preferably SnAg₄ or SnCu_{0.7}* which is the narrower statement of the range/limitation.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 27-52 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicants' Admitted Prior Art (AAPA) in view of Schuh et al. (US 61316863).

AAPA discloses the structure of a piezoceramic actuator (Figure 3) comprising a layer of basic metallization (3) applied to a ceramic material (2) on a surface of the actuator, a reinforcing layer (4) joined to said basic metallization by a joining layer (8) to which a connecting wire (5) is soldered.

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However, it fails to disclose the layer of basic metallization structured by discontinuities or recesses.

Schuh teaches the use of electrode layers comprising recesses in the metallization strips for the purpose of enabling a contacting with alternative polarity (Column 1, lines 42-45).

It would have been obvious at the time of the invention was made to use recesses in the basic metallization for the purpose of enabling a contacting with alternative polarity.

9. With regards to claims 28, AAPA discloses electroplating methods or screen-printing methods are used to produce printed patterns.

10. With regards to claim 29 and 31-33, AAPA in combination with Schuh discloses the claimed invention except for the basic metallization being made from a porous electrochemical deposition process. The method of forming the device is not germane to the issue of patentability of the device itself. Therefore, these limitations have not been given patentable weight.

11. With regards to claims 30 and 34-38, the combination described above discloses the claimed invention except for the claimed ranges. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the optimum ranges as claimed, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. In re Aller, 105 USPQ 233.

12. With regards to claims 39 - 42, the combination of AAPA and Schuh discloses the basic metallization having no cracks and the material.

13. With regards to claims 43-52, it has been held that to be entitled to weight in method claims, the recited structure limitations therein must affect the method in a manipulative sense,

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and not to amount to the mere claiming of a use of a particular structure. Ex parte Pfeiffer, 1962 C.D. 408 (1961).

Response to Arguments

14. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 27-52 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

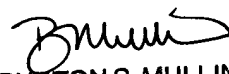
15. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. See PTO-892.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jaydi A. Aguirrechea whose telephone number is 571-272-2018. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th 9-7.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Burton S. Mullins can be reached on 571-272-2029. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


JAA
2/15/04


BURTON S. MULLINS
PRIMARY EXAMINER